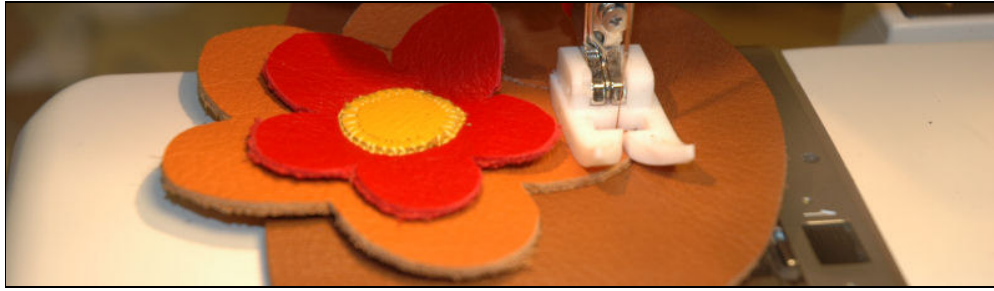


Soft leather shoes a'la ohelene.



Do you want to make your own ohelene-shoes?

You'll need some pieces of soft leather – scraps will do. I buy my leather from hobby suppliers and a Norwegian leather dealer called Skinnlåven. Leather from used jackets or bags may also be used. Thin leather is soft but will also wear out sooner than thicker leather. Thick leather may on the other hand be hard on your sewing machine and not as comfortable to wear. You'll have to figure out for yourself how much your machine can do. I recommend a special presser foot for leather and similar materials, as well as needles for leather. I use both poly and cotton threads. The special presserfoot may be replaced by stitch&tear or similar paper between the leather and the presser foot. I use straight stitches – length about 3,2mm.

The elastics I use are 10mm wide. I find this better than regular narrow elastic in that it doesn't make wrinkles all the way around the child's ankle. Hence more comfortable to wear. You'll need about 40 cm of elastics for small shoes. You actually need less, but a bit longer elastics make it a whole lot easier to work with.

The shoes can be made out of other materials as well. Feel free to alter the pattern and play with materials in any way. Make shoes for your entire family, your friends and neighbours, but please don't sell products as a direct result of using my tutorial or patterns. If someone wonders if they can get a copy of this tutorial, please direct them to <http://ohelene.net/blog/> where they can find their own copy and even buy the pattern.

Let's play! Cut two of each pattern piece. My shoes are the same for the left and right, which is great for children who aren't able to put the right shoe on the right foot, and they are also easier to make.



You'll also need a casing for the elastic both around the heel and on top of the shoe. The decoration on top of the shoe is where you can let loose the artist in yourself. I've chosen a simple flower for this particular shoe.

Cut or punch holes or slots in the upper part. This is where the elastics go later on. You can use scissors, a knife or a hole puncher.



Sew the casing on to the heel part. One side first. Put the elastics in place and sew the other side. Be careful not to sew into the elastics on this step. I usually place the casing about 75-100mm from the top of the heel part because this helps prevent the shoe from wrinkling up. Make a mark where you want yours to get it even or align it with the top. The casing is 1cm wider than the elastics itself.



Second you'll need to prepare the upper part. Decorate it in any way you like. Be careful not to sew in between the slots/holes for the elastics or else you will not be able to thread the elastics through later on.

The upper part and the sole are sewn first – right side facing each other. Mark the middle of both pieces and trace the starting point of the seam from this. Feel free to use clips or something else to keep it all in place if you find it hard to do it with just your hands. Leather doesn't allow much faults – you might rip the seam once or twice, but no more. Any needle holes will not go away and may make the shoe weaker.



Sew the heel on to the shoe right sides together starting slightly overlapping the upper part. This is where your sewing machine might give up or start spitting needles. Sew slowly or manually if needed. Do NOT pull the leather – especially not if the leather is very soft. Make sure you don't sew the ends of the elastics by accident.

The shoes is now almost finished; you just need to fasten the elastics. You'll need to do this before turning the shoe outside out. Pull one end through the holes using safety pins like I do, a tweezer or whatever suits you. I like using safety pins on both ends since it prevents the other end from running off. Adjust the elastics to fit your child. If the child has high ankles or is on the heavy side the elastics need to be longer than for a smaller foot. Sew the elastic closed by hand and cut off any excess. Rotate the elastics to hide the seam between the holes in the upper part.



Turn the shoe outside out and repeat the process to make its partner. Study your excellent work and please; try not to wake your child straight away to try on the shoes even though you want to. :D



Good luck! Feel free to contact me at ohelene@ohelene.net with any questions.
You may also buy my pattern at my website <http://ohelene.net/blog>.